



[Joe Slovo, 1926-1995](#)

## Hegemony and the NDR

In his 1905 article “[Petty-Bourgeois and Proletarian Socialism](#)” (attached, and linked below), Lenin wrote:

*“Can a class-conscious worker forget the democratic struggle for the sake of the socialist struggle, or forget the latter for the sake of the former? No, a class-conscious worker calls himself a Social-Democrat for the reason that he understands the relation between the two struggles. He knows that there is no other road to socialism save the road through democracy, through political liberty. He therefore strives to achieve democratism completely and consistently in order to attain the ultimate goal - socialism. Why are the conditions for the democratic struggle not the same as those for the socialist struggle? Because the workers will certainly have different allies in each of those two struggles. The democratic struggle is waged by the workers together with a*

*section of the bourgeoisie, especially the petty bourgeoisie. On the other hand, the socialist struggle is waged by the workers against the whole of the bourgeoisie. The struggle against the bureaucrat and the landlord can and must be waged together with all the peasants, even the well-to-do and the middle peasants. On the other hand, it is only together with the rural proletariat that the struggle against the bourgeoisie, and therefore against the well-to-do peasants too, can be properly waged.”*

Joe Slovo wrote (in the [SA Working Class and the NDR](#), 1988):

*“There is, however, both a distinction and a continuity between the national democratic and socialist revolutions; they can neither be completely telescoped nor completely compartmentalised. The vulgar Marxists are unable to understand this. They claim that our immediate emphasis on the objectives of the national democratic revolution implies that we are unnecessarily postponing or even abandoning the socialist revolution, as if the two revolutions have no connection with one another.”*

Hegemony is mentioned in the first discussion document prepared by the SACP for the Special National Congress held in December, 2009, and particularly the following section, taken from the last page of the document.

*“... it is important that as communists we are clear that working class HEGEMONY doesn’t mean working class exclusivity (still less party chauvinism). Working class*

*hegemony means the ability of the working class to provide a consistent strategic leadership (politically, economically, socially, organisationally, morally – even culturally) to the widest range of social forces – in particular, to the wider working class itself, to the broader mass of urban and rural poor, to a wide range of middle strata, and in South African conditions, to many sectors of non-monopoly capital. Where it is not possible to win over individuals on the narrow basis of class interest, it can still be possible to win influence on the basis of intellectual and moral integrity (compare, for instance, our consistent ability, particularly as the Party, to mobilise over many decades a small minority of whites during the struggle against white minority rule)."*

- The above is to introduce the original reading-texts: [Petty-Bourgeois and Proletarian Socialism, 1905, Lenin.](#)
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